

Job Description
Missouri State Highway Patrol

Class Title: Criminalist III - Trace Evidence

Title Code: V00515

Effective Date:

Date Reviewed:

Date Revised: 01/03/08

Immediate Supervisor: Criminalist Supervisor

Position Supervised: None

FLSA Classification: Non-exempt

Working Hours: An employee in this position works an eight-hour shift as directed by the division director; however, working hours are subject to change at the discretion of the commanding authority.

POSITION SUMMARY

This is a very responsible professional and technical position. Work includes performing complex and technical work in the scientific analysis of trace evidence. The employee also serves as a lead worker by training other criminalists and laboratory technicians. Work includes preparing reports, developing procedures for the laboratory, testifying in court, instructing others about the collection and analysis of evidence and maintaining and repairing the laboratory equipment. Work is performed with considerable independence within the framework of established procedures and policies.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES PERFORMED

(Any one position may not include all of the duties listed nor do the listed examples include all tasks, which may be found in positions of this class.)

Regularly accepts and analyzes trace evidence (e.g., hair and fiber comparisons, gunshot residue analysis, fire debris analysis, explosives analysis, paint and glass comparison, soil analysis, filament exams, fracture match and foreign substance contamination analysis) submitted from crime scenes or parties involved in criminal activity.

Makes decisions as to the appropriate test methodology for a particular examination based on the quantity and quality of the submitted sample.

Assesses submitted evidence to determine which items are most likely to associate or disassociate the victim or suspect with a crime scene.

Regularly works with a variety of potentially hazardous materials (e.g., HIV, hepatitis, and/or unknown pathogen contaminated body fluid evidence; unidentified chemicals on evidence).

Interprets test results obtained from the proper microscopic, chemical, and instrumental methods.

Participates in crime scene investigations as needed (e.g., collects, preserves, and examines evidence); trains other criminalists in the procedures utilized in conducting said investigations.

Routinely testifies as an expert witness in a court of law while maintaining composure and objectivity under intense cross-examination.

Serves as a lead worker by training the criminalists and laboratory assistants in trace evidence analysis.

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Provides recommendations and assists in the development and application of the techniques for upgrading laboratory capability.

Prepares evidence and exhibits; maintains report files; issues periodic and special reports as assigned.

Conducts training of law enforcement personnel about trace evidence analysis.

Educates trial attorneys, judges and juries about complex scientific analysis and serves as a technical advisor during trial proceedings.

Interacts with the media reference forensic science.

Generates and receives requests to and from other law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, attorneys, etc., reference criminal evidence and crime laboratory procedures.

Reviews and updates standard operating procedures, training, quality control, and safety manuals, etc., within the chosen/related discipline.

Successfully participates in the proficiency testing program for the section.

Operates standard office equipment (i.e., personal computer, telephone, fax machine, copier, adding machine, etc.).

Participates in and successfully passes practical competency and/or written test(s) prior to assuming casework.

Performs job-related travel, as needed.

Performs basic photography as needed.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Thorough knowledge of the procedures and methods used in the scientific analysis of trace evidence.

Thorough knowledge of the compilation and preparation of evidence for presentation in court and the role of an expert witness in legal proceedings.

Thorough knowledge and practice of safety rules and procedures associated with laboratory equipment and chemicals.

Ability to work with potentially hazardous materials as detailed in the description of duties.

Ability to read English effectively.

Ability to communicate in English clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.

Ability to generate and respond to requests for information from a variety of individuals reference forensic science.

Ability to perform work in accordance with prescribed procedures, make accurate observations of test results, and prepare accurate records and reports.

Ability to serve as a lead worker by training criminalists and laboratory assistants.

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Ability to gather, assemble, correlate, and analyze facts to be incorporated into a report of laboratory work and tests.

Ability to maintain composure while under cross-examination in regard to personal and scientific qualifications and defend laboratory findings in court.

Ability to distinguish colors necessary to perform laboratory tests.

Ability to perform microscopic work for extended periods.

Ability to work with highly sensitive information in a confidential and professional manner.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relations with others.

Ability to properly use laboratory equipment, computer and photography equipment, standard office equipment, and chemicals.

Ability to transport tools, equipment, and evidence necessary to facilitate crime scene investigations.

Ability to perform job-related travel (e.g., appearing in court, observing crime scene investigations, and attending training meetings, seminars, etc.).

Ability to communicate effectively.

Ability to participate in and successfully pass practical and/or written competency test(s) prior to assuming casework.

Ability to review and revise manuals.

Ability to educate individuals reference forensic science. This may include MSHP academy recruit classes, civic, school and attorney groups.

Ability to develop methods and/or techniques to upgrade laboratory capability.

Ability to interact with the media.

Ability to work with bloody material and material that may be of a sexual nature relating to criminal activity (e.g., written material, photographs, and/or verbal language, etc.).

Ability to work hours as assigned.

MINIMUM EXPERIENCE, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING REQUIRED

(The following represents the minimum qualifications used to accept applicants, provided that equivalent substitution will be permitted in case of deficiencies in either experience or education.)

Possess a baccalaureate degree in chemistry or one of the natural sciences. Coursework must include at least 25 semester hours of core chemistry coursework including two semesters of general chemistry, two semesters of organic chemistry, one semester of organic chemistry laboratory, and one semester of quantitative analysis, analytical chemistry, instrumental analysis or equivalent. Organic chemistry laboratory that is integrated into a 4 or 5 hour organic chemistry course will satisfy the laboratory course requirement. Academic record and applicable job experience will be a factor for consideration for this position.

AND

Possess at least two years of experience as a Criminalist II - Trace Evidence or comparable experience.

